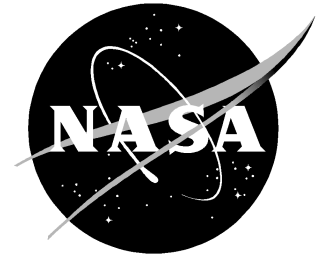


NewsRelease



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Langley Research Center
Hampton, Virginia 23681-2199

Kimberly W. Land
Office of Public Affairs
(757) 864-9885
k.w.land@larc.nasa.gov

For Release: Nov. 1, 2001

RELEASE NO. 01-110

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Are we relying too much on the automation of software?

Just as the invention of the first steam engine powered the industrial revolution, the invention of the first practical computer 50 years ago has radically changed our society. We rely on the use of computers and software to function in every aspect of our lives, but do we really know the risks associated with that enormous dependence?

Dr. Nancy Leveson, professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology will present "The Limits of Automation: How Far Should We Trust Software?" at a colloquium at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 6, at NASA Langley's H.J.E. Reid Conference Center.

Media Briefing: A media briefing will be held at 1:15 p.m. at the H.J.E. Reid Conference Center, 14 Langley Blvd., at NASA Langley Research Center. Members of the media who wish to attend should contact Kimberly W. Land (757) 864-9885 to arrange for credentials and an escort to the Reid Center.

Leveson will discuss the role software plays in the new types of potential accidents prone to the engineering designs of today. She will also address the changes needed to prevent software-related accidents and losses.

In addition to her current role at MIT, Leveson is an adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia. After receiving degrees in mathematics, operations research, and computer science, Leveson worked in industry as a systems engineer and eventually became Boeing Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Washington before moving to MIT.

In 1995, Leveson received an AIAA Information Systems Award for "developing the field of software safety and for promoting responsible software and system engineering practices where life and property are at stake," and an ACM Allen Newell Award, in 1999, for lifetime contributions to computer science and interdisciplinary research.

The general public is invited to the Sigma Series lecture on the same topic at the Virginia Air and Space Center at 7:30 p.m., that evening.

- end -